

Ovary removal may increase risk of chronic kidney disease

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Premenopausal women who have their ovaries surgically removed face an increased risk of developing chronic kidney disease, according to a Mayo Clinic study published on Wednesday, Sept. 19, in the *Clinical Journal of the American Society of Nephrology*.

"This is the first study that has shown an important link between estrogen deprivation in younger women and [kidney](#) damage. Women who have their ovaries surgically removed have an increased long-term risk of chronic kidney [disease](#)," says Walter Rocca, M.D., a Mayo Clinic neurologist and epidemiologist, and senior author.

Previous research conducted in animals has shown that the female hormone estrogen protectively affects the kidneys. That led Mayo Clinic researchers to wonder how removing both ovaries would affect kidney function in premenopausal women.

Chronic kidney disease, also called chronic kidney failure, means a person's kidneys are damaged and unable to filter blood the way that they should. If an individual's kidney becomes severely damaged and starts to fail, treatment options are limited to dialysis and a kidney transplant. An estimated 30 million adults in the U.S. have chronic kidney disease, and it is the ninth leading cause of death in the U.S., according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

These results highlight the need for physicians to discuss the potential increased risk for chronic kidney disease with women considering having their ovaries removed, according to Dr. Rocca.

"For women who do not have an increased genetic risk for breast and ovarian cancer, we recommend against the removal of the ovaries as a preventive option due to the increased risk of diseases, including chronic kidney disease and the increased risk of death," Dr. Rocca says.

Using the records linkage system of the Rochester Epidemiology Project, the study compared 1,653 premenopausal women living in Olmsted County, Minnesota, who had their ovaries surgically removed prior to 50 to an equal number of women of similar ages who did not have their ovaries removed. The women were followed for a median of

14 years. Mayo Clinic researchers found that women who had their ovaries removed had a 6.6 percent higher risk of developing chronic kidney disease, compared to those who did not. The risk of kidney failure was even higher for [women](#) younger than 46. Those who had their ovaries removed before 46 had a 7.5 percent increased risk of [chronic kidney disease](#).

Provided by Mayo Clinic

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